

than me—it is not right to hold up everything we are trying to do on Ukraine.

This is a global emergency. The fate of not only Ukraine but of democracy and its ability to achieve victory is under threat. And here we have objections to critical positions that can help us make sure that we win in that battle.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE
CALENDAR

Madam President, let me try one other thing. I want to make in order the same request that I previously made with respect to Calendar No. 788, Erin Elizabeth McKee, to be an Assistant Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MARSHALL. Madam President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, so here we go. The person who would be responsible for helping the humanitarian challenge in Ukraine and in the surrounding countries where 3 million people have fled to, we can't get her in position—can't get her into a position to do the job to help millions of Ukrainians who are fleeing.

I don't understand how the party of Reagan, the party of freedom and democracy, the party of standing up to these people can actually create a set of circumstances where this is like helping Putin at the end of the day. It is like helping Putin at the end of the day.

Now, while Senator MARSHALL didn't speak to it, I understand his concerns are about COVID origins. Well, there is nothing wrong with that. It has been a lively topic of discussion in many forums, including the Senate. But these things have nothing to do with what Ambassador McKee is nominated for: Assistant Administrator for Europe and Eurasia.

All of us, including Senator MARSHALL, know that we need to do everything possible to support Ukrainians in their time of need. Blocking Ambassador McKee is self-defeating.

It is also not clear to me what more USAID can do to satisfy Senator MARSHALL. I have inquired because I heard this was the issue. USAID has been engaged at the most senior levels in trying to be helpful and responsive to Senator MARSHALL. They offered him and his team briefings, and I understand that none of those offers have been accepted. They have also pointed Senator MARSHALL's office to a wealth of information on specific USAID projects of interest.

So I would urge the Senator, instead of blocking nominees, to act on USAID's multiple briefing offers and engage them meaningfully. That would be more helpful to his ultimate goal—but not to be helping Putin, at the end of the day, by not being able to take

care of the humanitarian needs of the Ukrainians.

I have seen a lot over my course of 40 years in public service and 30 years in the Congress. I just—this is mind-boggling. But more than that, it really undermines our national security. It really undermines our help with the Ukrainian people. And so I hope that some saner minds will prevail in the days ahead when I come back to the floor to try this once again.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

UKRAINE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, I am joined on the floor today by my friend and colleague Senator GRAHAM. We have the honor of coleading the U.S. congressional delegation to the Munich Security Conference, which for a great number of reasons, all well-deserved, is still called CODEL McCain. It is the only code that is named for a Senator who is no longer with us, and it is out of respect for Senator McCain's long tradition of support for that conference, NATO, and the Atlantic alliance, more generally.

This year, obviously things were very different. The Russians were on the border of Ukraine, and two things came out of this conference that I thought were important. One was an early flicker of hope within the delegation that the Ukrainians might actually pull this off. That was supported by none of our briefings. The entire national security establishment had presumed that it was only a matter of time until Ukraine fell. But Senator GRAHAM and I and others were questioning each other during that trip: Is there really no chance?

And the other thing was going after the kleptocrats and the oligarchs around Putin and making their lives miserable. And there was just a wonderful explosion of bipartisan support for that that has now manifested in funds, in laws, in pending bills, in lots of bipartisanship—and Senator GRAHAM and I are going to have a bit of a colloquy about that with the Chair's permission.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I will say one thing, and then I will hand it over to Senator GRAHAM.

On March 8, I sent out over social media this sentiment:

Keep alive in your heart the possibility that Ukraine could actually win: columns stalled, defense fierce, casualties high, morale low, deserters surrendering, food and fuel snafu, population uncowed.

Since then, we are hearing more and more. I will read four quotes, and the first is from the man we heard from this morning, the President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who, in his speech to the people of Ukraine on March 14, didn't just talk about peace for Ukraine—although, he did talk about peace for Ukraine, but he also talked about “our victory.” Victory. It is an important word to keep in mind.

He is not alone.

GEN Wesley Clark, also on March 14, said:

The battle for Ukraine is hanging in the balance. . . . If we can get enough in there, they'll push the Russians out.

Victory.

It would be a tremendous win for the West.

Anne Applebaum knows probably about as much about this area as anyone. She joined us on the Munich security delegation, and she also spoke afterward on the 15th of March about it. She said:

[V]ictory in this conflict—

Victory—

[V]ictory . . . would provide an enormous, transformational boost in confidence to the entire democratic world.

Michael Kofman, the director of Russian studies at the Center for Naval Analyses has said the same thing: “Are [the Ukrainians] in a position to win the war? Yes,” he said.

I will close with Francis Fukuyama. On the 10th of March, the author of “The Origins of Political Order” said the following things. I am quoting from a longer piece selectively.

1. Russia is heading for outright defeat in Ukraine.

2. The collapse of their position could be sudden and catastrophic, rather than happening slowly through a war of attrition. The army in the field will reach a point where it can neither be supplied nor withdrawn, and morale will vaporize.

5. The Biden administration's decisions not to declare a no-fly zone or help transfer Polish MiGs were both good ones; they've kept their heads during a very emotional time. It is much better to have the Ukrainians defeat the Russians on their own, depriving Moscow of the excuse that NATO attacked them.

Finally, he said:

A Russian defeat will make possible a “new birth of freedom,” and get us out of our funk about the declining state of global democracy. The spirit of 1989 will live on, thanks to . . . brave Ukrainians.

We are here together on the floor in bipartisan fashion to urge that in the press coverage and in our national security conversations about this, we keep open in our hearts and in our planning the possibility of victory for Ukraine.

Senator GRAHAM.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Carolina.

Mr. GRAHAM. Well, thank you. All I can say is, SHELDON, thank you.

John is no longer with us, but I think he is here in spirit at this moment. If Senator McCain were here, there would be 27 MiGs they would want to transfer because he would probably be in one, headed for Ukraine.

The bottom line is, 20 days into this fight, we are all amazed at how bad the Russians are doing and how well the Ukrainians are doing. And I think what Senator WHITEHOUSE is trying to remind us all of is that the outcome of Ukraine really does matter to the world at large.

Senator McCain was known for his support of the transatlantic alliance, a

rules-based society, a values-based world, and Putin has put that in jeopardy.

So let's look at it this way. If Putin wins, SHELDON, then the largest war criminal in the 21st century survives the dismemberment of a neighboring democracy, slaughter of the innocents on a mass scale. If he is still standing, I think China understands what to do with Taiwan more clearly; the Iranians are more bold when it comes to their nuclear ambitions; and the ripple effect in Asia and the Middle East will be felt if Putin wins.

Now, if Putin loses and Ukraine wins—victory for Ukraine—I think it would be the biggest change for the good since World War II. What would it mean? It would mean that a murderous war criminal who tried to use force of arms to impose his will on his neighbor lost. It would mean that the good guys won and the bad guys lost, and China would have to think twice about Taiwan.

How do we make sure victory for Ukraine is maximized? Only God knows how this ends, but here is what I think we can do in working together, with three lines of effort:

Economic and military aid. We have had a very robust package leave the Congress. The President announced \$800 million more in military aid today. We have a difference about the MiGs, but otherwise we are pretty much on the same sheet of music.

Sanctions against Russia. The war is not against the Russian people. They are in many ways victims of Putin as much as anybody. Unfortunately, the only way we can bring this to a conclusion and have victory for Ukraine is to crush the Russian economy, so secondary sanctions need to be on the table. Then, if China comes to Putin's aid, they need to understand the consequences of that decision.

So we are all in on sanctions, and secondary sanctions are now in play. The Ukrainian Ambassador asked me yesterday to broaden the sanctions to Russian officials in different regions that are part of Putin's war machine. President Zelenskyy asked for that today, too.

My good friend SHELDON WHITEHOUSE has been speaking about victory when nobody else hardly will, and I am here to say that victory for Ukraine is victory for America; it is victory for the rule of law; and it is victory for the post-World War II order that has led to historic prosperity.

Three lines of effort: military assistance, including MiGs; economic aid—fuel, food, humanitarian airlift if that is feasible; crushing sanctions; labeling Putin the war criminal that he is; and letting every Russian military commander know that, if you pick his side and you carry out these war crimes against the Ukrainian people, we are coming after you.

Senator WHITEHOUSE and myself met with the British Foreign Secretary and Ambassador to create a joint effort, an

intel cell, to collect information about Russian units engaged in war crimes in Ukraine and start putting the commander's name out for the world to understand so they will know that we are watching them.

How does this end? The Russian people end the reign of terror in Putin. It is in their hands. I encourage them to do it.

Finally, if there has been one voice on kleptocracy, it is SHELDON's. He has got it on climate change. He is determined to see that issue through to the end, but Senator WHITEHOUSE was talking about kleptocracy long before the invasion. So we are introducing together the Asset Seizure for Ukraine Reconstruction Act, which is an effort by our government, joining with international partners, to get every yacht we can get, raid every bank account we can find, take the money away from the thieves, and give it back to the Ukrainian people and eventually to the Russian people.

What Senator WHITEHOUSE and I are trying to do in a bipartisan fashion is to make the war real to the oligarchs. Without the oligarchs, there is no Putin. It is time for them to enjoy the experience of having their assets that they stole taken away from them. "Enjoy" is maybe not the right word. It is time for us to enjoy the sight of Russian oligarchs having their property taken that they achieved through thievery. It is time for us to start putting people in jail who engaged in the mass theft of the Russian people.

Victory for Ukraine is possible, I think, if we are all in on sanctions, if we are all in on labeling, naming, and shaming people around Putin as war criminals in order to break their will, and if we begin to pour it on when it comes to regaining control of the skies.

I am not for a NATO no-fly zone because I think that would put us in a situation with NATO and Russia that I am not comfortable with right now, but I am for Ukraine controlling their skies, a no-fly zone enforced by the Ukrainian military. That is why I want more anti-aircraft systems and the MiGs.

The bottom line here is that victory for Ukraine is possible because I think the Russian people and the Russian military are really not into this. I think the world is coalescing around the idea that if Putin wins, it is bad for us all. Now is the time. This is the most historically significant moment since the end of World War II for the continent of Europe and for freedom itself and for the rule of law.

If we can pull this off, then those who come after us will be very pleased with our efforts. If we fail, future generations will wonder "What the hell were you doing?" just like we all wonder how Hitler could have gotten so strong and nobody stopped him when they could have.

Let it be said in this moment of history that Senator WHITEHOUSE, Senator GRAHAM, and many others, par-

ticularly the Ukrainian people, believe not only is victory for Ukraine possible, it is absolutely necessary.

With that, I turn it back over to my colleague.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, in conclusion, let me just thank Senator GRAHAM. He has been an extraordinary leader on the Munich Security delegation year after year, and I think he has a "McCainian" view of our foreign policy needs.

I would close by saying, if there is a lesson from Ukraine, it is that oligarchs can throw out a dictator if you put pressure on them. So the kleptocracy initiative is important strategically in Ukraine, and it also puts in motion forces that can diminish kleptocracy and corruption around the world in a way that enhances our rule of law and national security.

The press has tended to buy into the narrative of defeat but not entirely.

Sudarsan Raghavan went to the front for the Washington Post, and he reported back this:

To be sure, most military analysts and Western officials still predict that Russian forces will eventually encircle Kyiv and push into the capital, possibly aided by airstrikes. While this could prove true, it's far from clear whether Russia will prevail.

That leaves open the important planning option of victory for Ukraine.

Then, when bad news comes, sometimes it is just not the whole story. The BBC reported the bad news that Russian forces were already inside the city of Irpin. Well, there is a little bit more to the story than that.

A Ukrainian army officer said that Ukrainian forces were waiting for civilians to evacuate Irpin before "we start to clear the city of Russians."

They don't have enough provisions—food, water. They don't have a lot of gasoline. They will get tired, and then we will go and drive them out.

Well, it appears that that counter-offensive is underway right now, as we speak.

As I close, I think all of our hearts and prayers go to the Ukrainian troops, who are trying to drive those Russians out of Irpin and out of Ukraine.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

REMEMBERING BRENT RENAUD, PIERRE ZAKRZEWSKI, AND OLEKSANDRA KUVSHYNOVA

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, over the course of just 3 days, the world lost three talented, tenacious journalists to Vladimir Putin's war crimes and brutal invasion of Ukraine.

Brent Renaud was a Peabody Award-winning documentary filmmaker who was working to tell the stories of Putin's war when he was fatally shot in the Kyiv suburb of Irpin on Sunday.

Then, on Monday, two more journalists with FOX News lost their lives when their vehicle came under fire just outside of Kyiv. A cameraman and veteran war reporter, Pierre Zakrzewski, was killed. He had been reporting in Ukraine since February.

We also lost Ukrainian journalist Oleksandra “Sasha” Kuvshynova, who was serving as a consultant for FOX’s team in Ukraine. She was just 24 years old.

Their colleague, correspondent Benjamin Hall, was also injured, and he remains in the hospital.

Journalists know they face danger when they report from war zones. They put themselves in harm’s way to tell the world the true stories that we need to hear.

Today, the Presiding Officer from Minnesota joined me and dozens and dozens of others to see the video, the pictures, and the photos of the war in Ukraine, which were shown to us by President Zelenskyy. Those pictures—many of them—were taken by very courageous journalists who risked their own lives. They bring us the unvarnished truth, unfiltered by government propaganda, at the times when we need it most. They are committed to basic ideals of truth, accuracy, and transparency—so committed that they put their lives on the line to make sure the world knows what is happening. Their commitment to these ideals only makes their deaths that much more tragic.

Today, three families and so many colleagues are grieving for these three journalists, grieving losses that cannot be replaced. They shouldn’t have to.

This war was started by a man with no regard for the freedom of the press or basic human rights; a man who is a former KGB agent and has open contempt and hostility toward real reporters, toward real journalism, toward free speech; a man who presides over a regime wherein journalists are killed with impunity.

According to the Committee to Protect Journalists, 28 journalists have been killed in Russia since Putin came to power 20 years ago, and 10 are currently in prison simply for telling the truth, for doing their jobs. According to Reporters Without Borders, Russia ranks 150 out of 199 countries for press freedom. They are actually behind Afghanistan and South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Last October, the United States and 18 other countries issued a statement, warning of “the Russian government’s intensifying harassment of independent journalists and media outlets in Russia.”

In 2020, the Russian Government began labeling many outside journalists as “media foreign agents”—a term reminiscent of the worst of the Cold War.

It is not just foreign journalists; Putin’s government has applied the “media foreign agent” label to independent Russian outlets in the country or to those operating near the country’s border—Russian reporters themselves. It goes against all of our values. It is the kind of authoritarianism that the Ukrainian people bravely fight every day now. They don’t want their country to turn into a place where re-

porters fear for their lives, where journalists can’t tell the public the truth. Journalists’ entire job is to ask questions, to challenge powerful interests, to—shall we say—afflict the comfortable.

Reporters put their safety and—as we saw with these three brave journalists in Ukraine—their lives on the line, whether it is covering floods and hurricanes in the United States or traveling the globe to bring us the stories of war zones.

We depend on reporters in my State and around the world to bring us the stories that impact our day-to-day lives and tell the stories that might not otherwise be told. They are too often under attack overseas increasingly. We recently had a President of the United States who attacked journalists in almost every stop.

As we all stand with the people of Ukraine, let’s recommit ourselves to fighting just as hard as they are for our values, for freedom of the press, for free speech. These three journalists made the ultimate sacrifice to show the world the heroism of the Ukrainian people. We pray that they are the last who have to do that.

We recognize that President Putin has been shocked by two things: shocked by the heroism of the Ukrainian people—those fighting back, those brave journalists, those freedom fighters, those mothers and fathers and children who have so courageously stood up against Russia; he is also shocked by the way President Biden so effectively has put together an international coalition, not just for the countries you would expect, but Germany, and Finland, and Sweden, and Switzerland—countries that have rarely chosen sides and stepped up the way that all of our countries have.

And while doing this, we send our sympathy and our gratitude to the families of Brent Renaud, to Pierre Zakrzewski, to Oleksandra Kuvshynova. They died doing the vital heroic work they love. We have a better understanding of this invasion, of the war crimes being committed, of how it is affecting people’s lives. We have a better understanding because of journalists like them, and we thank them from the bottom of our hearts.

REMEMBERING FRED ABDALLA

Madam President, I would like to remember an Ohio public servant whom we lost this year, longtime friend of mine, Jefferson County Sheriff—Eastern Ohio, along the Pennsylvania-West Virginia line, along the Ohio River—Jefferson County Sheriff Fred Abdalla.

He took office in January 1985. He served his community ever since for nearly four decades, in his sheriff’s car, going up and down the river, going to Mingo Junction and Tiltonsville to Steubenville, to Wintersville—all over Jefferson County. He served that community.

His colleagues and his neighbors called him tough but big-hearted. He was particularly passionate about solv-

ing crimes against children and seniors.

His chief deputy, Susan Bell, worked with Sheriff Abdalla for 32 years. She said:

He and I had a lot of cases together. He laughed a lot. . . . We cried a lot. . . . We worked as a team.

His colleagues at the department posted a moving remembrance of Jefferson County Sheriff Fred Abdalla. They wrote:

Although we miss you dearly, we will carry on as you’ve taught us to do in the face of adversity. One of the last “working sheriffs,” you were always involved and answered calls with your staff. You led by example. [You] never ordered a deputy to do something you would not do yourself.

Our thoughts are with his family, with the people of Jefferson County. His passing is a real loss for my State, for all who knew him. His dedication to his community will not be forgotten.

Rest in peace, Fred Abdalla.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. CANTWELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOMINATION OF JOHN H. CHUN

Ms. CANTWELL. Madam President, I come to the floor this evening to support the nomination of John Chun, who is to serve as judge for the U.S. District Court of Western Washington, and I know that we will be voting later tonight on that nomination.

I was proud to recommend to President Biden Judge Chun, who then was nominated by the President. My colleague Senator MURRAY and I know what a qualified individual he is to serve our country.

He has spent his entire legal career practicing law in the Western District of Washington, making him deeply knowledgeable of the district that he will serve. He is well-prepared for the Western District and offers a unique perspective to the bench, having served as a superior court judge for 4 years before joining the court of appeals in 2018, as well as his tenure in private practice.

Through his extensive courtroom experience as a former trial judge and current appellate judge, he has had much time as a trial litigator. He will be ready on day one to serve effectively on the Federal district court bench.

Judge Chun has received profound support for his nomination to the U.S. district court. Not only did his nomination receive bipartisan support from the Senate Judiciary Committee; it also received support from the American Bar Association, which unanimously rated him “well qualified” to serve in this position.

In addition to the endorsement from the National Asian Pacific American